

Abourezk, James

By MIKE CLARE and NANCY STEIN

Approved For Release 2005/01/13 : CIA-RDP88-01365R000300210064-2 06-8

(orig under class)

### Hidden away in Texas:

# CIA runs 'bomb school'

Washington, D.C.  
A year ago, "State of Siege," the most recent film of noted movie director Costa-Gavras, leveled a series of startling charges at the U.S. government.

At one point in the film, a Uruguayan police officer was shown receiving training in the manufacture and use of explosive devices at a secret police bomb school in the southwestern United States. Later the same officer was linked to a right-wing Uruguayan "Death Squad" implicated in the murders (some performed with explosives) of prominent Uruguayan radicals.

For most American viewers and movie critics, these scenes appeared as mere cinematographic flourishes in a controversial film. Now State Department documents unearthed by Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.) show beyond a doubt that the film was unerringly accurate in its picture of U.S. "counterinsurgency" programs in Latin America.

The existence of the Abourezk papers was first disclosed this year in Jack Anderson's syndicated column of Oct. 3. Pacific News has now received a full set of the papers which were used in preparing the following story.

The documents reveal that the U.S. government is, in fact, training foreign policemen in bomb-making at a remote desert camp in Texas. In response to Sen. Abourezk's inquiries, the Agency for International Development (AID) has now acknowledged that its Office of Public Safety (OPS) is providing such instruction.

At the U.S. Border Patrol Academy in Los Fresnos, Texas, foreign policemen are taught the design, manufacture and potential uses of homemade bombs and incendiary devices by CIA instructors. At least 165 policemen—mostly from the third world countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa—have taken this "technical investigations course" since it was first offered in 1969. Sixteen or more Uruguayans have received such training.

All costs of the training, rated at \$1750 per student, are borne by AID. Students in the technical investigations course first attend a four-week preliminary session at the International Police Academy (IPA) in Washington, D.C. There they are treated to lectures on such subjects as: basic electricity ("Problems involving electricity as applied to explosives"), introduction to bombs and explosives, incendiaries ("a lecture-demonstration of incendiary devices") and assassination weapons.

After completion of the preliminary course, the "trainees" are flown to the Los Fresnos camp for four week "field sessions." All lectures at Los Fresnos are delivered at an outdoor "laboratory" presided over by CIA instructors. The action lectures deal with such topics as: characteristics of explosives, electric priming, electric firing devices, explosive charges, homemade devices, fabrication and functioning devices and incendiaries. According to AID these sessions include "practical exercises" with "different types of explosive devices and 'booby-traps.'" (In the film State of Siege, sample bombs are shown being exploded in buildings, automobiles and in a 'public plaza' filled with dummies.)

In a memorandum to Sen. Abourezk, AID official Matthew Harvey argued that the technical investigations course was set up to help foreign policemen develop "countermeasures" against terrorist attacks on banks, corporations and embassies.

In order to develop countermeasures, he claimed, the trainee must first study "home laboratory techniques" used "in the manufacture of explosives and incendiaries." Only then, according to the AID argument, will he be able "to take preventive action to protect lives and property."

Although Harvey stressed the defensive nature of the training program, he admitted that the Department of Defense found the subject matter so inherently sensitive that it refused to provide instructors for the course.

AID was thus forced to seek help from the CIA. Indeed, once a "trainee" becomes proficient in bomb techniques, there is no stopping him from using them offensively against criminal enterprises or, as in "State of Siege," against opponents of a ruling oligarchy.